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COMOR-D-24/42

1 February 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance on Cayo Frances and
the Soviet Ship Khimik Zelinsky

1. Based on the evidence available, COMOR finds that the construction activity on Cayo Frances is puzzling and that low-level photography could possibly aid in its identification. The consensus of COMOR is that this is a target, which (along with others) although not demonstrably ominous, is nonetheless suspicious and poses the problem of identifying precise activity best solved by low-level photography.

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2. COMOR also considered the imminent arrival of another ship in Cuba which is reputed to be carrying military equipment. COMOR in this connection has reviewed the experience of the reconnaissance in the case of the Simferopol. In that instance, COMOR recommended day and night coverage every 4 hours. Photographic coverage [REDACTED] was accomplished every 4 hours both while the vessel was in port and in the vicinity of Havana after the vessel had left the port but only during the daylight hours. The results of this photography showed only that crates had been unloaded. We do not know what was unloaded at night.

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3. Accordingly, COMOR again recommends that at the time when the ship in question has arrived in port there be photographic reconnaissance every 4 hours night and day, including low-level coverage, if weather prevents [REDACTED] during the daytime until we have identified the nature of the cargo or until the ship has left the port. COMOR again stresses its belief that if there is an ominous cargo being unloaded or moved, such activity is most likely to take place at night.

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Chairman

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